

SUMMARY OF AUTHORIZATION DIALOGUE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A critical aspect of the National Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry was the exploration of the authorization of lay ecclesial ministers. *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* defines authorization as “the process by which properly prepared lay men and women are given responsibilities for ecclesial ministry by competent church authority (p. 54).” A thorough examination of the process of authorization presented in the Co-Workers document was explored in three symposium papers. The papers presented for consideration by symposium participants included papers written and presented by:

- Susan K. Wood, SCL, Ph.D. on a *Theology of Authorization*;
- Rev. Paul Golden, CM, JCD on *Canon Law and Authorization of Lay Ecclesial Ministers*;
- Charlotte McCorquodale, Ph.D. and Sean Reynolds, M.A. on *Current Models of Lay Ecclesial Ministry Authorization*.

Discussion groups examine the issue of certification of lay ecclesial ministers from the perspectives of 1) diocesan certification administrators within the Minnesota Catholic Education Association (MCEA) Certification process, 2) certified lay ecclesial ministers and, 3) national organizations who certify or who are considering certification for their members. Finally, a Bishop’s Panel explored the issue of authorization. Panel participants included:

- Bishop Richard E. Pates, Archdiocese of St. Paul,
- Bishop Gregory M. Aymond, Diocese of Austin,
- Very Rev. Michael J. Heppner, Vicar General, Diocese of Winona.

Symposium participants reached consensus on the need for additional theological reflection, study and dialogue on the action of authorizing lay ecclesial ministers. Theological reflection on the issue needs to include how the call to ministry is rooted in baptism and the role of the Bishop as authorizing agent. It was concluded by participants that our current theologies of ministry and vocation need to be expanded to be inclusive of authorized lay ecclesial ministers. Subsequent recommendations related to authorization focused on the following three themes.

Theological Reflection: These national leaders identified the need at all levels of the Church, to engage in a systematic process of dialogue and study that clarifies the meaning of authorization and effective practices. This should take into account Canon Law, the lived reality of the Church, and the theology and concepts within *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. Generated recommendations focused upon the following specific issues and actions:

- Development of graduated certification standards which allow for local variations and access by diverse populations,
- Clarification of the relationship between certification and authorization,
- Definitions of terminology related to the action of authorization,
- Exploration of canonical implications of authorizing lay ecclesial ministers,
- Classification of ministries which require authorization,
- Identification of proper agent(s) of authorization by clarifying the role of parish community, pastor, and bishop, and

- Identification of best practices related to certification at diocesan, regional, and national levels.

Additional Dialogue on Authorization: In over 20 recommendations made by symposium participants, the need for further dialogue on this issue became evident.

Generated recommendations focused upon the following specific issues and actions:

- Engagement of the USCCB, theologians, canon lawyers, ordained ministers, lay ecclesial ministers, and national organizations in the dialogue to develop structures that support the consistent authorization of lay ecclesial ministers with sensitivity to diversity.
- Encouragement of national organizations to work together in certification processes. Encouragement of state and regional conferences of Bishops to consider joint certification efforts such as the MCEA model.

Official Ritual(s) Related to Authorization of LEMS: Finally, the participants expressed a desire for an official ritual for use in the dioceses of the United States for public commissioning and authorization of lay ecclesial ministers. Complementary rites of sending and announcement for use in parishes should also be developed.

SYNOPSIS: AUTHORIZATION

FURTHER DIALOGUE: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

TOTAL VOTES	TABLE NUMBER(S)	SYNOPSIS OF ISSUE/RECOMMENDATION
14	8.1	The call to ministry is rooted in baptism
9	4.2	Authorization concludes a process of formation, prayer, community
13	5.2	Develop a catechetical tool on ecclesiology of lay and ordained ministry
33	14.2, 23.1	Bishops, universities, organizations dialogue on theology of LEM

FURTHER DIALOGUE: FORMAL STUDIES

24	1.1	Creation of a national task force to 1) study distinction and relationship between certification and authorization; 2) determine appropriate agents of authorization
80	14.1, 16.2, 16.3, 22.2, 24.1, 25.2, 25.3	USCCB and others discuss theology, terminology, agents, canonical implications, role of parish community, cultural groups, roles, current practices and processes
18	12.1	Five year review includes terminology
38	13.1, 21.1	Funding for a CARA study of current practices and processes

FURTHER DIALOGUE: NATIONAL & REGIONAL PROCESSES

65	2.1, 5.1, 8.1,	USCCB, theologians, national organizations dialogue on authorization and its relationship to certification and commissioning
8	17.1	Theologians and canon lawyers engage LEMs to develop a clearer understanding of LEM's role in the life and mission of the Church
12	20.1	That the USCCB consider, adopt, and/or adapt definitions and terms used in Dr. Susan Wood's paper to promote consistent understanding
18	23.2	National professional and cultural organizations discuss authorization and certification to streamline core competencies and provide for adaptations
25	7.1	Convene regional or diocesan symposia with diverse participants
17	22.2	Follow-up symposiums with under-represented groups
12	3.1	<i>Co-workers</i> as basis of discussion
6	7.2	Executive summaries of <i>Co-Workers</i>
32	6.3, 15.1, 16.1	Collaborative attitude among priests, deacons, LEM's
9	11.2	Annually convene Hispanic lay leaders

CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

21	8.2, 11.1, 17.2	National and/or diocesan certification standards
32	15.2	Standards of professionalism, while promoting minority access
117	3.2, 12.2, 13.1, 20.2, 24.2	Graduated certification standards (levels) which allow for local variations and access by diverse populations. [<i>Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord</i> invited “local adaptation, application, and implementation to achieve consistency where possible and to encourage diversity where appropriate”(p. 6)]
32	15.2	Equivalencies
27	6.2, 25.1	Local ministry training for under-represented groups

NATIONAL & REGIONAL STRUCTURES

43	1.2, 19.3	Alliance works with more national organizations
17	24.2	Alliance should consider levels of certification, taking into account economic, geographic, and cultural diversity
31	6.1, 19.2	Regional or state certification cooperation
10	21.3	Establish USCCB subcommittee on LEM and Authorization [recently closed]
19	19.1	USCCB-CCA restructured to be more accessible

ROLE OF BISHOP AS AUTHORIZING AGENT

15	9.1	Letter of appointment written by bishop, even when pastor hires
10	13.3	Who may authorize – bishop alone
7	14.3	Bishop seeks counsel of other LEMs and community
13	18.2	Determine which area of ministry requires authorization

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

69	13.2, 4.1, 10.2	Official national rite for authorization
38	13.2	Complementary rites of sending and announcement for parish

AUTHORIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS BY TABLE: August 2, 2007

<u>Count</u>	<u>Table</u>	<u>Audience</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
38	Table 13 Authorization 2	Bishops, and National Lay Ministry Organizations	We recommend that the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy be asked to prepare an official ritual for use by the bishops in the US Dioceses in the public commissioning and authorization of Lay Ecclesial Ministers. Complementary rites of send and announcement could be composed and distributed for parish use.
37	Table 2 Authorization 1	Bishops, National Lay Ministry Organizations and Other (Theologians)	USCCB, in conversation with National Organizations of Lay Ecclesial Ministers, plus theologians enter into a systematic process of dialogue to clarify the meaning and practices of dialogue to clarify the meaning and practices of authorization. Taking into account Canon Law, the lived reality of the Church and co-worker into the vineyard of the Lord. Conversation should include the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •For what purpose? •For how long? •Under what circumstances? •Who authorizes? •What is its relationship to certification? •What is its relationship to commissioning?
33	Table 13 Authorization 1	Bishops	We recommend that funding be secured for a national study (possibly by CARA) of current diocesan practices and processes of certification for Lay Ecclesial Ministry, as part of preparation for publishing national guidelines that could then be implemented and adopted in dioceses, accounting for their needs, resources, and cultural realities.
32	Table 6 Authorization 3) That bishops require and formators ensure that deaconal and presbyteral formation programs train candidates for ordained ministry to demonstrate appropriate knowledge, pastoral competency, and respectful, supportive attitudes for collaborating with the laity for the mission of the church.

32	Table 15 Authorization 2	Diocesan offices; Colleges & Univ.; Nat'l Lay Min. Office	Raise the standards of professionanism and education in ecclesial ministry to ensure the competence of both the lay and ordained minister, while promoting access to communitiees with minority representation by accepting ministerial experience aquired in and outside of the U.S. as equivancy to academic credentials but not in leiu of them in order to promote an enriched level of collegiality, diversity and respect among all the servants of God.
30	Table 20 Authorization 2	Certifying agents	Develop/adapt certification processes that would include means to assist those who do not meet the educational and formational standards, but who are effectively practicing as LEMs, especially in smaller, underserved multicultural communities.
27	Table 6 Authorization 1		(1) Utilizing the state certification best practice model established in the Dioceses of MN we recommend that bishops in their states or regions establish cooperative certification programs which utilize the USCCB standards.(Bishops, USCCB)
27	Table 6 Authorization 2		(2) That diocesan offices, pastoral institutes, and parish leadership develop local ministry training programs (parish or diocesan) for under-represented groups that can lead to certification and authorization.
25	Table 7 Authorization 1	Nat'l orgs, Dio leaders, Bishops	Create regional or diocesan symposiums to initiate a conversation around Lay Ecclesial Ministry involving lay people, lay ecclesial ministers, deacons, priests, bishops, and leaders of Catholic institutions of formation and learning, and all cultural groups of the region.
24	Table 1 Authorization 1	Bishops	We recommend the creation of a national task force whose objectives include: 1) the study of the distinction and relationship between certification and authorization, and 2) the determination of appropriate agents of authorizaiton.
22	Table 4 Authorization 1	National Lay Ministry Organizations and Other (USCCB)	The USCCB in collaboration with national organizations should develop a standardized liturgical ritual for celebrating the suthorization of the Lay Ecclesial Minister by the bishop or his delegate in the local community (separate from the recognition of volunteer ministers).

22	Table 23 Authorization 1	Academy, Bishop's Conference	Engage in theological research in the area of ecclesiology on the implications of authorization including: 1) the relationship between the ministry of the Bishop and the Lay Ecclesial Minister, 2) authorization as an ecclesial act, 3) best practices.
21	Table 3 Authorization 2	Bishops, Dioc offices, Colleges and Univesities, Pastoral Institutes, National Lay Ministry offices	Dioceses should offer gradated certification processes according to ethnic, geographical and educational/experiential realities, which will equally demonstrate competency and qualifications for ministry.
19	Table 19 Authorization 1	USCCB	The USCCB CCA should be reviewed and restructured so that the services it provides become more accessible and user-friendly and as such utilized by the majority of dioceses in our country.
19	Table 19 Authorization 3	National Organizations	The National Alliance of National Pastoral Ministry Organizations that currently include NALM, NPM, NFCYM, and NCCL should be broaden to include the organizations representing other ministry specialities and cultural gifts such as NABCA, NACC, FDLC, NCADDHM, FIP, NCCHM.
18	Table 12 Authorization 1	Bishops, USCCB Committee on Laity	The USCCB committee on the Laity in conjunction with the 5 year review of the document should produce a brief addendum with clarification of the terminology regarding authorization.
18	Table 15 Authorization 1	USCCB CCA	Before authorization can be adequately considered Bishops need to promote dialogue and collaboration between lay and ordained minsters in order to establish the understanding that we are indeed all co-workers in the vineyard each embodying different gifts that enrich and support one another.

18	Table 23 Authorization 2	National Organizations	Work together to bring greater representation of national professional and cultural organizations to the discussion on authorization and certification in order to streamline essential core competencies and to provide for local and cultural adaptations.
17	Table 22 Authorization 2	Diocesan offices, symposium organizers	In follow-up conversations and gatherings, invite groups that are under-represented (e.g. Asian, Native American, priest pastors, permanent deacons) to become part of the conversation. Make available resources necessary for participation funding, translation, etc.
17	Table 24 Authorization 2	national organizations	The Alliance should consider multiple levels of certification that ensure accessibility and affordability and take into account economic, geographic, and cultural diversities.
16	Table 1 Authorization 2	National Ministry Organizations & Colleges and Universitites	We recommend that the aliance seek out new partners (such as NCEA and CCMA) and invite collaborators (such as AGPIM and ACCU) to its work on common standards and national certification.
16	Table 12 Authorization 2	Diocesan offices, National Lay Ministry Organzations	Diocese and national organizations developing standards for ministry certification should allow flexibility to recognize the competence and pastoral skills of immigrant ministers who are not fluent in English.
16	Table 18 Authorization 1	Bishops	We recommend that the Bishops convene a group of theologians that are culturally diverse that can clarify the terminology of authorization and theology of vocation/ministry.

15	Table 9 Authorization 1	Bishops, parish leadership, lay ecclesial ministers.	Even when the proximate authorizer of the LEM is the pastor, an episcopal connection with the diocesan Church should be made clear by reading a letter of appointment written by the diocesan bishop.
14	Table 5 Authorization 1	theologians and canon lawyers	Theologians and canon lawyers work and dialogue together to clarify how the distinctions of lay ecclesial ministry further the development of a faithful and fruitful understanding of authorization (who, what, where, and why)
14	Table 8 Authorization 1	Bishops, Diocesan Offices, and Other (Committee on Laity and Sponsoring Organizations)	Bishop's Committee on Laity and sponsoring organizations are asked to clarify meaning of authorization, including its relationship to what is properly rooted in baptism and what is participation in ministry of ordination.
14	Table 24 Authorization 1	bishops, diocesan offices, parish leadership	Committee on the laity of the USCCB needs to clarify further the distinctions between authorization and certification, and in light of those distinctions, the relationship between authorization and certification as well as identify potential agents of authorization and certification.
13	Table 5 Authorization 2	NCCL and NCEA	NCCL and NCEA, particularly the Seminary Department, take leadership in identify and/or create catechetical tools for educating all of the faithful in an ecclesiology that honors ALL of the ministers in the Church (priests, deacons, lay ecclesial ministers, all the baptised); fostering hope now and for the future through the collaboration of both ordained and lay for the good of the world. Presume consultations and products developed in a variety of languages/cultures.

13	Table 16 Authorization 1	Bishops, Catholic colleges or Grad schools, and Other (NFPC, NCCA, NADD)	That the USCCB, NFPC, NCEA and the National Association of Deacon Directors focus on education and formation of the ordained to study the theology of Lay Ecclesial Ministry, its implications and applications of the local Church.
13	Table 18 Authorization 2	Bishops	We recommend that the US bishops clarify what areas of ministry that qualify for authorization.
12	Table 3 Authorization 1	Bishops, Dioc. offices	Invite ordained and lay ecclesial ministers to periodic conversations on authorization and certification using the document Co-Workers in the Vineyard as a starting point for the discussion.
12	Table 20 Authorization 1	Bishops	That the US Catholic bishops consider, adopt, and/or adapt the definitions of certification, authorization, and other related terms addressed in Dr. Susan Wood's paper, in order to promote consistent understanding and use in national organizations, Catholic institutions of higher education, and diocesan offices, as they seek to implement these processes.
12	Table 25 Authorization 2	colleges/unive rsities, national	A multi-disciplinary study of authorization should occur, including canonical, human-resources, legal, and theological aspects.
11	Table 14 Authorization 2	Schools/Theol ogians	University and professional organizations are asked to explore the theology of authorization for lay ecclesial ministry including the roles of the bishop, the community and cultural groups.
10	Table 13 Authorization 3	Bishops	We recommend that the USCCB Committee on the Laity clarify who has the authority to authorize whom for what ministry, and strongly recommend that the locus for authorization be with the bishop and with the pastor only by the exception and in his role as delegate of the bishop.

10	Table 14 Authorization 1	All	As the Co-Workers document energizes lay ecclesial ministry further study and clarification is needed on the levels and emerging theology of authorization, including various roles (local parish, community, cultural groups, etc.).
10	Table 21 Authorization 3	Bishops	Establish a USCCB sub-committee on lay ecclesial ministry and authorization
9	Table 4 Authorization 2	All	We recommend that the authorization moment be construed as the end of a process where the needs of the community and the pastoral competencies of the Lay Ecclesial Minister are matched after prayer and reflection.
9	Table 10 Authorization 2	Bishops, Diocesan offices, parish leadership, liturgy commissions	Authorization for LEMs ought to be celebrated in a liturgical setting.
9	Table 11 Authorization 2	Bishops, national hispanic ministry associations	Create mechanisms to gather (e.g., annually), affirm and re-authorize hispanic lay ministers in the USA.
8	Table 10 Authorization 1	Bishops	That bishops clarify their interpretations of authorization
8	Table 11 Authorization 1	National ministry organizations, USCCB	Move toward national certification of lay ecclesial ministers.
8	Table 17 Authorization 1		That theologians and Canon Law lawyers engage Lay Ecclesial Ministers to develop a clearer understanding of the role of Lay Ecclesial Ministers within the life and mission of the Church.

8	Table 17 Authorization 2		That each diocese develop a process for recognizing and authorizing Lay Ecclesial Ministers for their diocese.
8	Table 25 Authorization 1	National organizations, universities	Certifying agents should develop quick-start certification processes to aid the fulfillment of ministries in areas of great pastoral need.
8	Table 25 Authorization 3	USCCB, CLSA	Clarification of canon 517.2 should serve as a therapeutic basis for defusing resistance to collaborative ministry.
7	Table 14 Authorization 3	Bishops	Local bishops, in their exercise of authorizing lay ecclesial ministers, should seek the counsel of other competent lay ecclesial ministers as well as the wisdom and witness of the local community.
6	Table 7 Authorization 2	USCCB	Write and distribute for reading and discussion an executive summary of "Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord." This should include discussion guide.
6	Table 16 Authorization 3	Bishops, and Catholic colleges or Grad Schools	That bishops and theologians explore the place of the community in the authorization of Lay Ecclesial Ministers.
5	Table 8 Authorization 2	Bishops and Diocesan Offices	Dioceses will implement national certification standards or Lay Ecclesial Ministers in an intentional certificate process for Lay Ecclesial Ministry.
5	Table 21 Authorization 1	Certification Alliance Commission	Research (probably by CARA) to gain information on current certification standards and procedures in dioceses across the U.S.
4	Table 16 Authorization 2	Bishops and Diocesan Offices	That local state Catholic conferences call for conversation and clarity regarding the distinction between authorization and certification for Lay Ecclesial Ministries at the local level.
4	Table 19 Authorization 2	Bishops and Diocesan Offices	State Catholic Conferences of Bishops should place on their agenda the issue of sponsoring joint certification for lay ecclesial ministers to increase the number of competent and formed ministers.

4	Table 21 Authorization 2	Canon Law Society	Study, research and publish its findings on authorization and its implications for lay ecclesial ministry
4	Table 22 Authorization 1	Bishops, diocesan offices, pastoral institutes, symposium organizers	Develop education for our multicultural/intercultural church for what authorization means. Develop clear language and examples.